A Prisoner of War In Virginia

1864-5

George Haven Putnam

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By Geo. Haven Putnam

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Geo. Haven Putnam

1st Lieut. and Adjt. 176th Regt., N. Y. Vols.

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George Haven Putnam

Adjt. and Bvt.-Major 176th N. Y. S. Vols.

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From a Photograph by Brady taken in 1863

Reprinted, with Additions, from the Report of an Address Presented to the N. Y. Commandery of the U. S. Loyal Legion, December 7, 1910

With Illustrations

G. P. Putnam's Sons
New York and London
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Copyright, 1912
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GEORGE HAVEN PUTNAM

The Knickerbocker Press, New York

To

MY ARTIST CHUM

MAJOR HARRY VANDERWEYDE

IN MEMORY OF PRISON DAYS (AND NIGHTS) IN LIBBY AND DANVILLE

ILLUSTRATIONS

FACING PAGE

GEORGE HAVEN PUTNAM,
1st Lieut. and Adjutant, 176th Regt. N. Y. S. Vols., September, 1864 . *Frontispiece*

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An Experience in Virginia Prisons During the Last Winter of the War

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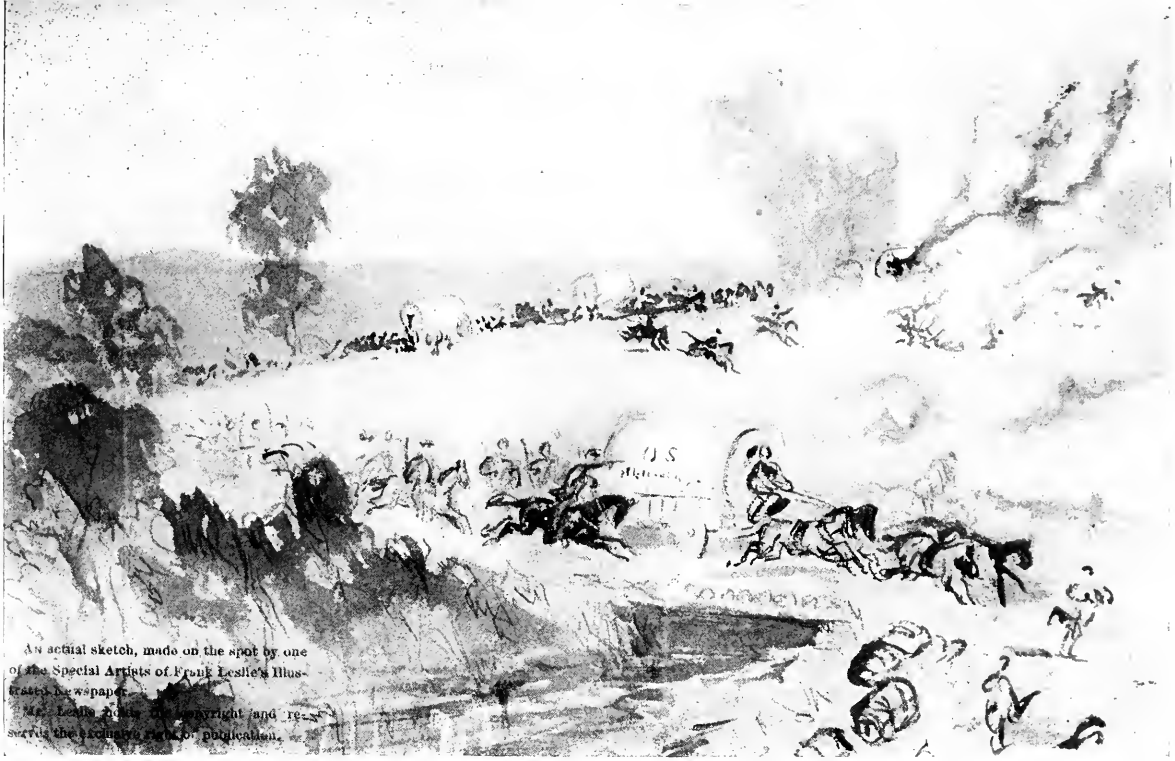
THE following record of my sojourn in the winter of 1864–65 in Libby and in Danville prisons was prepared under the instructions of the Commander of the New York Commandery of the Loyal Legion for publication in the volume of Reports of the Commandery. Forty-eight years have elapsed since the winter here described, and I cannot undertake to say that my memory can be trusted for all of the details or incidents. I have no doubt that these will be open to correction on the part of comrades who may have shared the experiences of those strenuous months. I can only say that the record has been set down in good faith, and may be accepted as possessing such value as belongs to any individual experience recalled after a long interval of years.

My experience as a prisoner in Virginia began on the 19th of October, 1864, a day made famous by Sheridan's decisive victory at Cedar Creek. At the time of the battle, my regiment, which belonged to Grover's division of the 19th Army Corps, occupied a position on the extreme left of the line that had been assigned to the corps. On our left, the field sloped down to the Shenandoah Pike, while on the farther side of the pike, a rising ground extending to the flank of Massanutten Mountain was occupied by the 8th Corps. The line of the entire army faced southward, the only direction from which an attack seemed to be possible.

It was difficult in any case to believe that an attack was to be anticipated even from so persistent and plucky an opponent as General Early. Within the preceding thirty days, Early's army had been sent whirling through Winchester, and had been driven back from its works on Fisher's Hill, with a serious loss of men and of guns. It seemed certainly very unlikely that these beaten, tired, and hungry troops could venture an attack upon Sheridan's lines.



Mosby's Raiders Attack a Commissary Train

The battle of Cedar Creek has been often described, and the main events are, of course, familiar to all of my readers who were present or who have kept themselves interested in the record of the decisive events of the war. My individual relation to it was but small, as I was "taken possession of" during the early hours of that strenuous morning. We were aroused in the foggy darkness by the sound of firing across the pike on our left. We realised that something was wrong with our friends in the 8th Corps, but it was impossible to see across the road, and during the first hour our understanding of what was happening was very confused. In falling into line on the alarm, we faced, as said, to the south, but when round shot came rolling along our trench from across the pike, it was evident that the attack to be repelled was to come from the east or from the southeast. Our brigade was wheeled to the left so as to face, or nearly to face, the pike, and before long the rest of the division wheeled in like manner, forming an extension of our line. A field-battery of four or six guns had been placed a little in advance of the position of my regiment. The first shots across

the road had disabled some of the horses, and the men had dragged in behind our infantry line all of the guns but one. A brigade-commander (I think it was Colonel Dan. Macauley of the 11th Indiana) called from his horse (and it is my memory that at that hour but very few of the officers had ventured to mount their horses) for men to go out and drag in the last gun. A group of us started across the field, but just as we went forward, Macauley received a shot through his chest. The men in the line, finding that the "Butternuts" were working across the pike to the north, fell back, if I understand rightly not under any orders but with the instinct of veterans to keep themselves from being outflanked. When I reached the gun, I found that there were not enough men with me to make it possible to move the piece across the rough ground, and we were almost immediately cut off by an intervening line of the enemy. The slope was an uncomfortable resting-place, as for a brief time it was receiving a scattering fire from both sides. We lay down flat on the rough turf, and while I was not even at that time a large man, I remember having the uncomfortable feeling, as

"And Sheridan, fifteen miles away!"

the zip, zip of the balls went over our heads, that I was swelling upward as big as an elephant. We had, however, but few minutes to be troubled with this phase of the situation, as the second line of the enemy soon came sweeping across the road and promptly took possession of our little group. I was the only officer in the lot and I think there may have been with me eight or nine men. As I saw the advance of the rebel line, I had hidden my sword in a cleft of the rock. It was a presentation sword bearing, in addition to my own name, those of the company officers of my regiment, and I have been hoping since the war that some impecunious Southerner would be interested, for a proper consideration, in looking up the owner; but I have had no tidings of it. I had in my belt a small Remington revolver and without thinking the matter out, I had, in place of disposing of the pistol, taken out and thrown away the cylinder. The first "Butternut" with whom I came in contact was a little excited; I think he must have gotten hold of a drop of 8th Corps whiskey. He took the pistol from my belt, and as long as he held it up straight in front of him, he was quite pleased with

his acquisition. When on turning it, however, he discovered the absence of the cylinder, he was a very mad "reb" indeed. He brought up his Enfield with an imprecation and ordered the "damned little Yank" to find that cylinder. I was naturally not very much interested in meeting his wishes excepting for the purpose of getting rid of the threatening Enfield, and I had given the cylinder a miscellaneous chuck and should not have known where to look. Fortunately one of his officers was within reach and, knocking down his piece, sent him to the front, while myself and the men with me were taken across the creek to be placed with the prisoners that had been gathered in a little earlier from the camp of the 8th Corps.

In the course of an hour or so, these prisoners, aggregating, I think, ten or eleven hundred, were stood up in line, and certain non-commissioned officers, delegated for the purpose, "went through" each individual of the line with a thoroughness and precision that indicated previous practice. They took possession of overcoats, blankets, and the contents of our pockets—money as far as we

had any, watches and knives; they also took what under the circumstances was the most serious loss for men who had a long march before them, our shoes. I was pretty well down on the left of the line and some time before my turn was reached I was able to note what were the articles that were being appropriated. I realised that a considerable march had to be made and I was not at all happy at the idea of being obliged to do my tramping without shoes or with the fragmentary apologies for shoes that the "rebs" were chucking back to the Yankees in exchange. I took my knife and made some considerable slashes in the uppers of my shoes. The result was that they were not considered worth appropriating and they fortunately held together during the march and for some time thereafter. The only other man in the line, as far as I noticed, who saved his shoes was a young staff-officer of the 6th Corps, Lieutenant Vander-Weyde. I had observed the youngster before because he had small feet and wore patent leathers with which he seemed to be well satisfied. I remembered hearing some of our boys throwing out jeers at "pretty little patent leathers" as, a day

or two earlier he had ridden through our camp. The smallness of his feet saved for him his pretty boots. These were taken off two or three times by the examiners but no one was able to put them on, and with a half-indignant good nature, the last examiner threw back the articles with the words, "Here Yank, you can keep your damned pretty little boots." As far as I can remember, VanderWeyde had the only decent looking boots to be seen that winter in my division of the prison.

We remained under guard in a field to the south of the Cedar Creek bridge until two in the afternoon. We were out of sight of the lines on which the fighting was being conducted, but we realised that our men must have been driven back and that Early's force was in close pursuit, because the sound of the firing had gone off far to the northward. Between twelve and two, there had been a lull or else the firing was so far distant that it no longer reached our ears. A little after two, there was a revival of the sound of musketry and we thought it was coming our way. The impression that there might be some change in the condition of affairs was strengthened by our being hurried

into a column of march and started along the pike southward. Our hosts had forgotten to give us any mid-day meal and most of us had not had time for any breakfast before getting into fighting line in the early morning, so that we were rather faint for a hurried tramp. During one of the short rests that had to be allowed to tired-out men in the course of the afternoon, our brigade dog who had, very unwisely for himself, followed the line of march, was taken possession of by some hungry men and a little later on one of my own group was good enough to give me a hurriedly toasted chunk. I do not know how I should have been able to hold up for the afternoon if it had not been for my share of the dog.

While, on the ground of our being hurried southward, we were somewhat encouraged about the final outcome of the battle, it was not easy to believe that what had seemed in the early morning to be so thorough a defeat could have been changed into a victory. In fact, it was weeks, before, through the leakage of news into the prison, we got knowledge of the actual outcome of the day. In the course of the evening, our guards remem-

bered to scatter among us a little hardtack taken from one of our own commissary waggons, but the ration was very small for the amount of marching that had to be done with it. Sometime before midnight, in company with VanderWeyde with whom I had fallen into "chumming" relations, I made a break for liberty. We remembered the region through which we had marched not long before as "ruthless invaders," and it was our idea to strike for a dry ditch which was on the farther side of a field adjoining the road. We bolted just behind the nearest guard and took him so far by surprise that his shot and that of the guard next in line did not come near enough to be dangerous, and we succeeded in tumbling into the ditch which we found unfortunately to be no longer dry. There was, in fact, an inch or two of water in the bottom. There was nothing to do but to lie quiet and wait until the column of prisoners and guards had passed. We were disappointed, however, to find that the sound of the marching continued for an indefinite period; and in fact pretty soon there were added to the tramp of feet sounds from a long series of wheels. It was evident that the

trains, or such of the waggons as remained of the trains, were being moved southward. Then there came a rumble which seemed like that of field-guns. While we were puzzling in our minds as to whether the whole army could really be on the retreat, the question was answered in a most unsatisfactory fashion. Not only were Early's troops marching southward but they were going with such urgency that the road was not sufficient for their purpose. They were straggling into the fields on both sides, and a group of two or three, too tired and too sleepy to watch their steps, tumbled into our ditch on top of us. They said things and so did we. Our state of mind was in fact like that of South Carolina three years earlier; we only wanted to be let alone. But that privilege was not granted to us. We were hustled out of the ditch, chilled and out of temper at our failure and at what seemed to us the unnecessarily rough treatment of our new captors. We were, so to speak, butted back into the road and hustled along from group to group until in the early hours of the morning we found ourselves again in the column of prisoners. I understood later that our

cavalry had pursued that column through a large part of the night and we must have done pretty lively marching to keep ahead of them, but the horses doubtless were tired on their part.

It is my memory that the tramp to Staunton took the better part of three days. I recall our arrival in early morning in the main street of the little town, at breakfast time or at what seemed to us ought to be breakfast time. The prisoners were huddled into a little square in front of the inn and we were near enough to hear the sound of the rebel officers at breakfast. I think we could take in the pleasant smell of the ham and eggs. After what seemed to us a very long wait, the commissary came out on the little balcony of the hotel with some assistants bearing a few boxes of hardtack. These boxes were thrown over from the balcony into the square in such fashion that they broke as they fell and the officers on the balcony enjoyed the spectacle of the prisoners scrambling for their breakfast. Later in the day, we were put into box cars and started on the journey for Richmond. There was but a single track and our train was switched frequently to allow of the pass-

Libby Prison, Richmond, Va.

From a photograph taken in 1865

ing of passenger trains and supply trains, so that our progress to Richmond was slow. The officers were marched across the town to Libby Prison where the captain of our guard secured a receipt for us from Sergeant Turner, while the men were taken over to Belle Isle.

The first of the prison functions was the stripping of every man to the skin for the purpose of a further appropriation of any valuables that he might have succeeded in concealing. In this fresh search, I lost $150, that I had sewn into the inside of my shirt. The moneys that had been saved by a few of the officers after the first search were, with hardly an exception, taken possession of at the second examination.

We were interested to see the adjutant of the prison noting down in a little memorandum book the sums taken from each man. "It will be all right, gentlemen," he said reassuringly, "these moneys will of course be returned to you." This ceremony completed, we were shown into the general living room on the top floor of the Libby building. It is my memory that at this time, October, 1864, the prison was full, but not crowded.

Floor space was made for us under the supervision of one of our own officers who took upon himself the responsibilities of what might be called quartermaster's duties. At our request, VanderWeyde and myself were given floor space together, and we then took an account of our joint property. I had picked up en route (I do not recall where) a small piece of blanket and I had also succeeded in retaining a broken pocket-knife. My chum had a tin cup and a pocket-comb. These things were held in common. As personal appurtenances we had been fortunate enough to save our tooth-brushes which the examining sergeant had not considered worth appropriating, and my chum, who was a clever artist, had also been able to retain possession of a pocket sketch-book and a pencil. These tooth-brushes later became noteworthy. It is my memory that there were not more than a dozen or so among about 350 officers. The possessors placed their tooth-brushes through the button-holes of their blouses; partly because there was no other safe or convenient storage place, and partly perhaps to emphasise a sense of aristocratic opulence. We became known as the "tooth-

brush brigade." My chum, with some protest from me against the using up of my knife, did some artistic carving on the handle of his brush, producing with no little skill a death's-head and a skeleton. Late in the winter, when we had been moved to Danville, one of the officers of the guard offered me for my brush $300, of course in Confederate currency. I expressed a little surprise that the article, no longer new, should have such selling value, and he began to reply, "Well, but you see now we cannot get any more," and then checked himself. The word "now" emphasised itself in my ear, and connecting this with certain rumours that had already leaked into the prison, I realised that Wilmington must have fallen and that no more tooth-brushes or other supplies from England could be secured. But this is, of course, advancing in my narrative.

In Libby, as later in Danville, the prisoners, comprising as said, only commissioned officers, maintained an organisation and ordinary discipline. We accepted as authoritative the orders of the senior officer in the prison, and this officer associated with him two or three men who divided up

between them responsibilities for keeping order, for assigning quarters, for adjusting difficulties, etc. Our general went through the form, and it was not much more than a form, of appointing on his staff a commissary. It was the duty of this officer to receive from the prison sergeant the daily ration and to arrange for an equitable distribution of such ration among the prison messes. We had, for the convenience of such distribution, been divided into groups of six or eight. The so-called commissary had, of course, nothing to issue but the ration that was brought in. His office reminded me of the description given by the young showman in the menagerie, "this is the jackal what perwides for the lion always perwiding that there is anything to perwide." The Libby ration in these last months of 1864 comprised soup made out of inconspicuous little beans, and a chunk of corn bread. During the close of our sojourn in Libby, the soup part was cut off and the ration reduced itself to the corn bread. The corn bread as baked was marked out into squares, but for some reason which I never had explained to me, each square of corn bread was a ration not for one but for two. The

messes, therefore, were subdivided into pairs and the chums had to arrange between themselves each morning for the division of the flat chunk into two portions. My chum and myself took turns in cutting that chunk into two pieces. On one piece was laid the broken knife and the man who had done the cutting then called to the other fellow, who stood with his back to the cake, to say whether he would have it "with" or "without" (the knife). Whichever piece one got, the other always looked a little bigger. We regretted to part with the black bean soup, although we had not been fond of it. It contained about as many bugs as there were beans, the taste was abominable, and the nourishment probably slight. I understood later when I was on parole in Richmond, that the beans and corn-meal issued to the prisoners had been rejected by the commissaries as unfit for their own troops. I should not venture to estimate with any precision the size or the weight or the chunk of corn bread which came to us once a day. My memory is, however, quite clear on the point that it was absurdly small. Some of us went through the form of cutting our chunk into three

pieces with the idea that we would make three meals out of it; but it was very difficult to avoid eating up the three meals within the first hour even though we knew that we should have to wait until eleven o'clock the next morning for another chunk. Large or small, the chunk was not even nourishing throughout. The cake as baked contained other things besides corn-meal. Pieces of the corn-cob were ground up indiscriminately and we also found in the cake cockroaches and other insects and occasionally pieces of mice that had lost their way in the meal-bins. In reply to complaints that were from time to time submitted, the prison officers had nothing to say but that it was the best they had and that the Yankees had better be thankful that they got anything. I judge that by December 9, 1864, it must have been a very difficult task indeed for the rebel commissary-general to secure by his two lines of single track roads, one of which was from time to time being cut by our raiders, sufficient food to supply the army and the townspeople. It was not surprising that the fare remaining for the prisoners should have been inconsiderable in amount and abominable in

quality. The stupid brutality of the whole business was in keeping prisoners at all in Richmond during the last winter of the war; for that stupidity which, as it meant the loss of many lives, may fairly be described by the simpler word of murder, the responsibility must rest with Jefferson Davis, Commissioner Ould, and General Winder.

The abiding place through the night and through the greater part of the day was, as said, the strip of floor allotted to each. It is my memory that at this time Libby was not so crowded but that each man could have the advantage of putting his head back against the wall. Later, when we were transferred to Danville, the arrangement of space required four rows of sleepers, two with their heads to the wall and two with their heads to the centre. The wall spaces were, of course, in demand. At the point of the wall in Libby where my own head rested (more or less restlessly) I found scratched (apparently with the point of a nail) on the two or three bricks the names of previous occupants of the quarters, names representing in most cases men who had "joined the majority." I naturally added, in order to complete the record, my own

name on a brick a corner of which was still free. Some years after the war, a correspondent wrote to me from Richmond that he could if I wished send me this autographed brick in consideration of the payment of $5.00. As, however, there would have been no difficulty in scratching my name on another brick, I did not think the purchase worth while. That brick and its companions are now resting somewhere in Ashtabula County, Ohio. Some of you will recall that the Libby building was purchased by some speculators to be put up in Chicago for exhibition. It was a stupid plan, for the historic interest of the building was properly to be connected with its location, and there was something repellent in the thought of using as a show place a structure which represented so much of pathetic tragedy. I was myself not at all displeased to learn that the train carrying the timbers and the bricks of Libby had been wrecked at Ashtabula, and the materials scattered over the surrounding fields. The timbers were, I believe, finally taken to Chicago, but I understood that in place of going to the labour of picking up the scattered bricks, they utilised in reconstructing the

building, old bricks available in Chicago. Whether or not they undertook to replace the scratched names of the dead veterans I do not know.

The ship-chandlery of William Libby & Son was, as we all know, placed close to the edge of the James River, so that goods could be landed directly on the Libby pier. Looking across the river from the back windows of the prison, we were able, during the nights of December, to see from time to time the flashes of the guns from the lines of the Army of the James. We used to make our artillery officers study out the line of fire and give us their opinion as to whether they did not believe the flashes were getting nearer. I suppose the distance was something over six miles, and if I am wrong in this calculation, there are veterans from the Army of the James who will set me right.

The prison had by this winter been so protected that there was no chance of any further attempts at escape by tunnelling. The cellar floor through which Rose and his associates had dug their tunnel in 1863 had been masoned over and under the later arrangement of the guards it would have been impracticable in any case to secure admission

to this floor without observation. A most important part of the protection, however, was given by the addition to the prison guard of a magnificent blood-hound. The sergeant marched in front of the guard and the hound in the rear, and looking from the prison windows we could see him cock up his eye at us as he passed, as if he very fully understood the nature of his responsibilities. From time to time, the hound would also, either under orders or possibly of his own motion, make the circuit of the building, sniffing around its foundations. There would have been no chance of an undiscovered tunnel while that dog was within reach. I had trouble with that dog some months later when I was on parole in Richmond. I had been told that the intelligence of the blood-hound enabled him to be taught all kinds of things, but that it was very difficult, if not impossible, to unteach him anything. This hound had been taught "to go for" anybody wearing blue cloth. At this later time, I had secured clean clothes from home and the blue was, therefore, really blue instead of the nondescript colour of my much-worn prison garments. I had occasion from time to

time to go to Castle Thunder, where the dog was kept, and the sergeant of the prison guard amused himself by putting the dog on a long leash to see how near he could get to the little Yankee adjutant without quite "chawing" him up. I complained in due form to the captain of the guard that the jaws of the hound did not constitute a fair war risk. He accepted my view and had the dog put on a shorter leash so that I was able to get past him into the prison door. I was told that when Weitzel's troops entered Richmond, the dog was captured and was later brought to New York and sold at auction on the steps of the Astor House. If the buyer permitted any of his home circle to wear army blue, there must certainly have been trouble.

On the first Tuesday in November, it was decided to hold in the prison a presidential election. I may admit to having shared the doubt expressed by some others as to the wisdom of the attempt. There was among the prisoners a dissatisfaction, which might be called a well-founded dissatisfaction, at the way in which they had been neglected, or appeared to have been neglected, by

the authorities in Washington. At this time, the exchange had been blocked for more than six months and when in the following February, exchange arrangements were finally resumed, there had in fact been no general exchange for nearly twelve months. As the war progressed and the resources of the Confederates were diminished, it was impossible for them to make appropriate provision for the care of prisoners, at least as far as the prisons of Northern Virginia were concerned. Even if there had been an honest desire on their part to save the lives or to protect the health of the helpless men for whom they were responsible, the task would have been difficult; but it was quite evident that there was no such desire. I remember among the war correspondence that is in print a letter from Commissioner Ould to President Davis, written in the winter of 1864–65, urging the policy of a prompt renewal of the exchange arrangements. It is evident, writes the commissioner (I am quoting only the substance of the letter and therefore do not use quotation marks), that we need for our depleted ranks all the fighting men that can be secured. The men who are returned to us from

the Northern prisons are for the most part able-bodied and fit for service; while but few of the fellows that we should send North in the exchange will be permitted by their surgeons again to handle muskets.

I realised some months later the truth of Commissioner Ould's observations. The men who came out of Libby and Danville in February, 1865, were, with hardly an exception, unfit for service. The Confederates whom we met on the steamboats coming to Richmond as we went down the James, looked to be in good working and good fighting condition. By November, 1864, the mortality in the Virginia prisons had become serious. The men who were not entirely broken down were, through lack of food and through the exposure to cold from lack of clothing, physically discouraged and depressed although they did maintain for the most part will power. I could not but fear, therefore, that in an election which was to indicate their approval or their disapproval of the management of the authorities in Washington and of the inaction in regard to the renewal of the exchange, a majority of their votes might naturally be cast

against the re-election of Lincoln. The men who had planned this test election trusted their comrades, and their confidence proved to be justified. When the vote was counted, it was found that we had re-elected Lincoln by about three to one. Years afterwards, I learned from Robert Lincoln that the report of this vote in Libby Prison, reaching his father months later, was referred to by the President as the most satisfactory and encouraging episode in the presidential campaign. His words were in effect: we can trust our soldiers. The votes had of course no part in the official count but they were, as Lincoln understood, important, as showing the persistent courage and devotion of the men. My own ballot would in any case have been illegal as I was but twenty years of age, but I have always felt that it was on the whole the most important vote I ever cast.

One night late in December, we had an interruption which, while at the time fatiguing, gave ground for encouragement. We were ordered up at two o'clock in the morning and were hurried across the town and packed into box cars for Danville. We gathered, from the exchange of a

word or two with the guards who permitted themselves to talk, that there was a scare at headquarters about the advance of our lines. The journey was exhausting partly because, in the hurry of getting rations for us, the authorities had found nothing more convenient than salt fish and the train was allowed to stop but seldom. But thirsty and tired as we were, we were happy with the thought that perhaps our men really were getting into Richmond. They really were, but it took five months more to accomplish the task.

We had quarters assigned to us in Danville in a tobacco warehouse, the windows on the southern end of which overlooked the River Dan. The view from these windows included, in addition to the river, a stretch of North Carolina, and in the far distance could be seen the hazy outlines of the great Smoky Mountains. These mountains meant to us more than a bit of scenery; we associated with them the possibilities of freedom. It was the general talk that if a man could make his way to the recesses of the mountains, and that if he did not starve or freeze in the wilderness, and if he struck the right kind of darkies or the right

kind of Southern deserters, he might possibly finally get through to our lines. A few men did succeed, as I will relate later, in getting away from Danville Prison and several of them tried the great Smoky route. As far as I could learn from later reports, but two succeeded in getting through. The others were lost and were doubtless starved or frozen in the wilderness. As it was impossible to get any food with which to make the start and as the army blouses, originally not very stout, were worn threadbare, and as the majority of the men had either no shoes or but fragments of shoes, the prospects for starving or for freezing on the way were excellent.

The tobacco warehouse might have made a fairly comfortable abiding-place if it had been properly fitted up and cared for. But the glass was broken from many of the windows, and Danville lies high enough to give many cold days and many still colder nights in the months of winter. The building comprised three floors, a ground floor and two upper floors. The sojourning of the prisoners was restricted to the two upper floors. The lower floor was used merely as a thoroughfare

to the yard and for the water parties who were permitted once or twice a day to bring water from the river. It was the duty of the guard who protected the yard and of his fellow who patrolled the lower floor, to see that no prisoners were permitted to linger either in the yard or on their way back to their own floor. Now and then, in fact, the prisoners were subjected by impatient guards to some very annoying hustling. The two floors were divided so that by the beginning of the winter there were about two hundred on each floor. I emphasise at the beginning of the winter because as the months rolled on, the numbers became smaller. There were enough vacancies through death to give space on the floor. At the outset, however, the men were arranged in two rows with their heads to the wall and two rows with their heads to the centre. The additional comfort of the position by the wall was to some extent offset by the fact that it was nearer to the cold wind that came through the broken windows. The floors were dirty as we took possession of them and they became dirtier as the weeks went by. At one time, we essayed a petition to the officer of

the guard for hoes with which to scrape off the surface of dirt. The request was denied on the ground, I believe, that the hoes might have been utilised as weapons. At either end of the room, was an old-fashioned stove fitted for the burning of wood, and as the weather grew colder, sleeping positions near the stove advanced in value. Exchanges of berths were made for property consideration. A piece of blanket, a pair of shoes more or less dilapidated, or a pocket-knife, constituted the exchange currency. The wood for the stove was brought in from the wood-pile in the yard by the prisoners, the work being of course done under guard. The supply of wood was kept pretty scant and there were long hours when the fires were out and when our application for permission to bring in more wood received no attention. It is my memory that in Danville the daily ration was brought down to the corn bread alone. There were apparently no damaged beans available and the good beans that were fit to eat must have been very much needed in Richmond. Danville was at this time one of the great sources of supplies for Lee's army at Richmond, and the one-track

road was very fully employed with the trains from the South bearing to Lee's army such supplies as were still to be secured in the almost exhausted Confederacy.

My selection of a chum proved fortunate in one way that I could not have anticipated. VanderWeyde was clever with his pencil and some portraits that he had sketched of the guards attracted attention not only in the prison but with some of the officers outside. He was fortunate enough to be invited by one or two officers who had homes in town, to go to their houses and to sketch wife or daughter. He objected properly enough that his blouse was shabby and his trousers disreputable and also that in the absence of soap he was not fit for the presence of ladies. The officers wanted the portraits, and the result was that the fortunate VanderWeyde secured a bath with real soap, and a jacket and pair of trousers that held together and that gave him in the midst of the rags with which he was surrounded, the appearance of an aristocrat. The rags discarded by the swagger artist enabled me to do some very important patching on my own garments. Further, in going first

to one house and then to the other, VanderWeyde had the opportunity of getting something to eat and finally, and that is where I came in, he was thoughtful enough to remember to stow away in a pocket a couple of hoe-cakes for his chum. It was VanderWeyde's good fortune a few months later, to serve on the staff of the officer who commanded the advance brigade of the troops taking possession of Danville. His commander, knowing of his prison experience, authorised him to receive from the mayor the formal surrender of the town. VanderWeyde had, during his experience as a working artist, been a guest at the mayor's house and had been there cared for by the mayor's wife. He had, therefore, an additional motive for desiring to make the function of surrender as gentle and as informal as possible. He found himself, however, received by the mayor with the utmost severity and with not the slightest sign of recognition. In April, 1865, the mayors of Virginia towns found it difficult, and it was quite natural that they should have found it difficult, to accept any social relations with the triumphant invaders.

While the occupations of the day gave very little opportunity for exercise, we found ourselves fairly sleepy by nightfall. Either by some general consensus of habit or possibly as a result of orders from our commanding officers, we got into the habit of turning in (a mere figure of speech, of course, as we had nothing to turn into) at about the same hour and all together. It was the custom, after we were all recumbent and there was quiet across the floor, for two or three of the men who had good voices and good memories to raise a song in which the rest of us joined as far as we knew how or when there was an easy chorus. The songs selected were, however, mainly of the quieter not to say sadder variety, which did not include choruses. I have the memory that the songs grew sadder as the winter wore on. We began jubilantly enough with *Marching through Georgia* and other verses of triumph or hopefulness, but in the later months the more frequent selections were such airs as *Mother, Will You Miss Me? Tenting on the Old Camp Ground*, and *Home, Sweet Home.* As the lines of the sleepers thinned out through the winter months, the doubts evidently increased

as to the prospects for any further triumphant marching through Georgia or anywhere else by our lot of veterans. Some of the improvised choirs had memory also of the words and airs of psalms and hymns and the singing of these constituted the only religious exercises of which I have memory. The singing went on until from the commander's corner of the room came the word "taps," after which we were all expected to be quiet and to get what sleep we could.

In spite of fatigue and of the fact that we were nearly all youngsters, sleep was by no means an easy accomplishment. The floor was hard and cold currents of wind coming in through the broken panes made it chilly. There was hardly anything that could be called covering. I suppose that among the 350 men, there may have been sixty or seventy scraps of blanket. As before stated, the overcoats had been taken together with a large number of the shoes, so that shoulders and feet were both chilly. Last and by no means least, sleep was interfered with by the constant irritation of the big vermin which grew bigger as we grew smaller. The beasts crawled over the ground

Morning Toilet

from body to body and their attacks seemed to become more aggravating as the men became more emaciated. By daylight, they could be picked off and the first occupation of the morning was usually to free oneself from their immediate presence, but in the darkness there was nothing to be done but to suffer with patience.

It was not easy to find occupation for the long hours of the day. In the earlier weeks of the winter, the more energetic of us drew lots for the opportunity of making the trip to the river, a hundred yards or so away, for the bringing in of water. The water parties comprised from six to eight men who were watched over by two or three guards. Under the earlier arrangement, each man carried a pail, but later as we grew weaker, a pail full or a pail half full was more than one fellow could manage and the routine finally came to be for two men to carry together a pail about half full of water. There was also occasional requirement for parties to bring in wood from the wood-pile but in this luxury we were sadly stinted. There was for a time some activity in chess-playing. Two groups were formed at either end of the room

which fought out with each other in a series of tournaments. I had a boy's knowledge of chess which was much strengthened by my prison experience with older men. It is my memory that the chess champion of the prison was Captain Mason who is at this time (December, 1910), Consul-General in Paris. Our chess-boards were made out of a couple of pieces of plank which we had been permitted to secure from the guard-house, and the squares on which had been marked out with charcoal. The chessmen had been carved, with no little labour, out of pieces of our fire-wood. Later in the winter, our chess playing came to a stop. We found that the attempt to concentrate eyesight and attention, when we had had so little to eat that our brain cells were denuded of blood, caused dizziness, and occasionally fainting fits. I think, in fact, that an order to stop chess came from the general or his adjutant.

Something was done in the way of occupation or amusement by the more active-minded in telling stories by turn, stories which comprised everything from actual reminiscence to the vaguest fantasy. Under the pressure of contributing their share to

the entertaining of the group, men who, according to their own account, had never been guilty of imagination and had not had any power of expression, found it possible to add something of personal interest to the entertainment. There were also instituted a few classes of instruction. In company with three or four others, I took lessons in Spanish from one of the officers who was a Mexican by birth. He succeeded in securing, through the kindness of one of the guards, a second-hand Spanish grammar which was divided up into as many pieces as there were students. Some of us, therefore, had to begin the grammar in the middle and some tackled their Spanish language from the final pages; but before the book was absolutely worn out, we did make some progress.

I myself undertook a class in German, but as I had no grammar or text available I had to work entirely from memory. I was assisted in my undertaking by a scholarly young captain, William Cook, who had had time before entering the service to get through some years at least of his course at Yale. Cook knew no German, but he had a good working knowledge of grammar. During my

sojourn in Germany, I was under the care of an oculist and I had taken in my German by ear and knew none of the rules of grammar. The work of our class was shaped by the presentation by myself of a certain number of sentences or at least of words in grammatical relation to each other, from which examples Cook would work out the grammatical rule. Then our patient students would have to learn first the words and then the rule. We did make some progress so that before the work of the class was given up there was quite a fluency of utterance, most of it pretty bad as far as the German was concerned, but still giving evidence of application. I recall that towards the end of our class work, Cook and I decided to give a banquet to our class. The feast could be described as Barmecide as there was nothing to eat and nothing to drink. But we gathered together on the floor as if we were sitting about a well-appointed table. From my end of the table I read out, as if from a menu, a list of the courses which as given were certainly most appetising and in the wording of which no expense was spared. The associate host from his

end specified the wines which were to accompany each course. After going through the motions of eating and drinking, the two hosts read in turn the toasts of the evening which had to be responded to by the men called upon. It was the instruction that the utterances were to be made in German with the permission when no German word was available, to fill in that the gap with an English term. The language resulting was naturally pretty mixed, but we did get some fun out of the attempt and we promised each other that "when the cruel war was over," the dinner was to be repeated in the best restaurant in New York and that it should not be a Barmecide feast. The real feast never came off. By the time that those of us who were New Yorkers got home, the group of our German class had been so seriously broken into by death that the coming together would have been not a conviviality but a sadness.

The desire of occupation, whether in the way of amusement or instruction, was not merely for the purpose of passing the time. We realised in looking about the room that unless our minds, or at least our thoughts, could be kept busy in some

fashion, there was risk of stagnation that might easily develop into idiocy. I recall a number of cases in which men who, as their vitality diminished had lost the power of hopefulness, had lost also the control of their wills; the faces became vacant and in the more serious cases their conscious intelligence disappeared. These men would sit twirling their thumbs or would stand looking out of the windows with a vacant stare and with eyes that saw nothing. I should have been interested in learning how far this loss of will power and understanding persisted with such of the men as survived the imprisonment; but there was no opportunity of tracing the later fortunes of our prison comrades.

I have referred to the "government" of the prison—and to the fact that we accepted, at least in our officers' prison, the authority of seniors just as we should have done in camp. I believe that this acceptance of authority and maintenance of discipline accounted for the better success on the part of the officers as compared with the enlisted men in maintaining the vitality and in lessening the percentage of illness and death. There

were two other prisons in the town, both I believe tobacco warehouses, in which the enlisted men were confined, possibly a thousand or more. There was no difference in the quarters and no difference in the food between the two prisons; but we understood from the Confederate sergeants that the percentage of death among the men was very much greater than among the officers.

During the first two years of the war, there was for the majority of the Northern regiments very little difference in class between the men in the ranks and the commissioned officers. The men in the ranks and the officers came from practically the same family groups and the same average occupations and they differed but little in average intelligence. As the war progressed, however, the ineffective officers who had gotten their commissions either by accident or by influence, were largely weeded out. The men who secured commissions during the last two years were much more largely men who were promoted from the ranks as they had shown capacity. They were naturally on the whole of better education, and of larger intelligence than the men who remained in

the ranks and they possessed a better will power. It was this will power, the decision to live if possible, the unwillingness to give up, beaten by the Confederacy or by circumstances, that helped during the last winter of the war to save the lives of a number of starving officers.

The senior officer in the Danville Prison during the larger part of the winter was Brigadier-General Joseph Hayes, of Boston, who had been in command of a regular brigade in the 5th Corps. It is my impression that Colonel Ralston who had commanded one of the regiments from Central New York, acted as associate with Hayes. I do not recall the name of the officer who did duty as prison adjutant. The officer next in rank to Hayes was a plucky and headstrong general named Duffié. Duffié had, I believe, seen service in France and was, I was told, a capable cavalry officer. He was ambitious, vain, and if crossed, somewhat hot-tempered. His qualities would not have been impressed upon my memory if it had not been for his responsibility in the direction of an attempt to escape, an attempt which was badly planned and badly executed and which cost the

lives of several of our prisoners and the wounding of several more.

At the time of this attempt which was, I think, in the middle of January, 1865, General Hayes was ill and had been removed to the prison hospital. News had come from Richmond to the Confederate commander of our prison that a band of Yankee raiders were operating somewhere to the west of Danville and were probably intending to make a dash at certain of the bridges on the railroad running southward. A couple of companies, comprising perhaps 150 men, had been brought into Danville by train as the first contingent of a force which was expected to head off the raiders and to protect the bridges. We knew the number of this force because they were made the guests of the prison guard and in going into the guard-house for their noon-day meal, they had stacked their muskets within sight of our prison windows. It occurred to some one that if those 150 muskets could be seized, we should have enough force to overcome, at least for the moment, the prison guard, while the unarmed owners of the muskets would be helpless. Duffié (the officer highest in

rank) jumped at the idea and called for volunteers to make a rush for the muskets. We youngsters were naturally not called into the council, but we were able to hear some of the discussion. A number of the older or at least of the more experienced officers gave their opinion at once against the scheme. The opportunity for getting at the muskets was to be made by the sending out of a party for water and at the moment of the water party's return, a rush was to be made with a column of a hundred or more, at the open door of the basement. The difficulties of the immediate execution of the scheme were serious. Even, however, if the first steps had been successful and we had secured the muskets, and if we had been able with these muskets to get control of the guards and of the guard-house, the position would have been a very unpromising one. In order to get to our own lines on the northeast, it was necessary to make our way through Lee's army. The only direction in which we were not likely to encounter rebel forces was the southwest towards the mountains of North Carolina. That plan meant, however, finding our way without food,

with very little clothing, and with hardly any shoes, through many miles of wilderness. Such a body of men could have been easily overtaken by a comparatively small force of cavalry. To most of us the plan seemed, therefore, to be an absurdity. Among those who took this view was Colonel Ralston.

Duffié listened to the objections and then asserted his authority as commander. "I order the attempt to be made," he said, "and I call upon the men who have not forgotten how to obey orders, to follow." With such a word there was of course no alternative. A hundred and fifty of us fell in and received our instructions. Three or four were detailed to overpower and to choke senseless the guard who had charge of the prison yard, while another group was detailed to take care in the same manner of the guard or of the two guards who patrolled the lower floor. Other men were detailed to make up the water party, a party which being left outside of the building, would, if we succeeded in breaking out, be in no little peril. The signal was given and the rush at the guards was made. One man was successfully stifled, but one of the two, or

of the three (I have forgotten the number) succeeded, before being finally jumped upon, in getting out a yell of warning. The yell came just as the door had been opened to let in the water party. The guards outside made a rush at once to close the half-opened door and the column from within, taken by surprise, was a little late in making the counter rush. The guards succeeded in getting the door closed and the bar up, and then, putting their rifles through the gratings of the windows, they fired one or more volleys upon our men assembled on the lower floor. A number were hit, I do not now recall just how many, but I do remember that one of the first who fell was Colonel Ralston, who, while protesting from the beginning against the movement, had been at the head of the column. The water party, fortunately was not molested. We carried our wounded upstairs as the men from the guard-house rushed out and took possession of their muskets. There was nothing more to be done and the Confederate colonel in charge realised that the attempt was over. He marched in a little later with his adjutant and a couple of guards and had the wounded

carried to the hospital. As Ralston was taken off, I recall his answer to a question from one of his friends as to the extent of his hurt: "It is," he said, "neither as deep as a well nor as wide as a church door, but 't will do." He died that night. It was the belief of most of us that if Hayes had been within the prison at the time of this so-called "opportunity to escape," no such foolhardy attempt would have been risked.

In the course of the winter, a plan of escape of a very different character was attempted. In looking out of the upper windows of the prison, we could see on the side towards the open country a big ditch which was not many feet from the prison wall. The suggestion came to some that if by means of a tunnel from the basement, one or more men could reach the ditch, they could lie quiet until an opportunity came to slip away in the darkness towards the open country. The first difficulty was how to get to the cellar for the necessary work on such a tunnel. We had noted on first visiting the prison yard a pair of folding doors, barred from the inside, which from their position evidently gave entrance (or as barred,

refused entrance) to the cellar. One of the guards was posted in the yard and it was his duty to remain there through the two hours (or later, as the watches were extended, through the four hours) of his service. The walls about the yard were high enough to make impossible any scaling, and even if an exceptionally tall prisoner, a man with a Jean Valjean capacity for flying over a wall, could have gotten across, he would have found himself under the fire of the muskets of the guards who patrolled about the building. The guard having charge of the yard got into the habit, therefore, as the winter progressed and the weather became more severe, of taking his station inside the door of the lower floor. This absence of the guard gave us the opportunity of testing the bar which held closed the doors leading into the cellar. It proved to be wooden and a hand-saw having been produced through the nicking with a pen-knife of the edge of an old table knife, the bar was, on one stormy evening when the wind made a sufficient noise, sawn through with no great difficulty. The pressing open of one of the folding doors revealed, as it could only reveal, an unknown dark-

ness. We had, of course, no means of knowing how deep below the floor of the cellar might be. Lots were drawn for the duty or the privilege, of finding out, and a couple of men tumbling over found the drop not more than four feet. A third man snuggled into a corner of the yard to give warning when the coast would be clear so that the interlopers could make their way back again. It was only on stormy nights that this invasion of the cellar became possible but there were in the course of a month or two enough such nights to make possible a beginning of the work on the tunnel. The operation had to be conducted entirely by "feel" as the cellar was in total darkness. The floor of earth was, fortunately, fairly dry. A point was selected midway along the outer wall, that is to say the wall towards the open country, at which by measuring by "feel" the length of the bigger stones in the foundation, the prospector secured, or thought he had secured, a stone big enough as an archway for the tunnel. The excavating instruments comprised a couple of tin plates and a few shingles. The ground was fortunately soft, and as the cellar was not visited,

for this particular tunnel there was no such difficulty as was encountered with most of the attempts at tunnelling from prisons, in disposing of the excavated earth. In the course of weeks, progress was made, but a miscalculation as to the length of the superlying stone or as to the strength of the stone, came near to costing the life of one of the tunnellers and resulted in the necessity of beginning the work over again. The stone fell in and caught our man somewhere on the shoulders. A hurried signal was given out to the yard and at considerable risk of discovery (fortunately there was a heavy sleet on) several men tumbled in and succeeded in lifting the stone and in bringing out in a half-smothered condition their unfortunate comrade. He had his face washed and was slipped upstairs without being observed, and the next day, after a more careful examination as to the safety of the foundation stone above, a fresh beginning was made.

In the course of a few weeks, this tunnel was projected out beyond the building and beneath the walk along which marched the prison patrol. We had of course no spirit level and there was no

light with which it could have been utilised. The working of the line of excavation was, therefore, a matter of feel and of guess-work, and it is not surprising that under the circumstances the engineering failed in precision. The tunnel had been permitted to slant upwards too close to the surface of the ground. As a result of this mischance, one of the guards in an early morning hour (fortunately at a time when no workers were busy in the cellar) fell through. Frightened as he was (I believe his arm was broken) he yelled murder, and the guard next to him fired off his piece. Then followed a general firing of pieces into the darkness and the turning out of the entire prison guard. We understood afterwards that the alarm had come to the guard-house that the Yankees were attacking the town, a belief that was shared by that number of the prisoners who had not been invited to take part in the work of the tunnel and who had no knowledge of the scheme. Nothing more serious happened, however, than the spoiling of our sleep for the early morning hours. When the poor guard whom we had unwittingly entrapped was pulled out of the hole, there was of course

no difficulty in tracing the line of the tunnel. The folding doors admitting to the cellar were closed with an iron bar, and we judged that the guards whose duty it was to hold post in the yard must have received a pretty sharp reprimand from their superiors. Through the rest of the winter, however inclement the weather, the man with the musket remained outside. A tin plate had been left behind by one of the workers and this was brought into the upper room by the sergeant of the guard for the purpose of identifying the owner. Fortunately the plate carried but a single initial, and the owner preferred to lose his property, valuable as it was, rather than to incur the penalty that was visited upon all attempts to escape.

I recall during the winter but one other method of escape that was tried and that did bring a small measure of success. The path by which we travelled from the prison to the river on our trips for water passed the back of a foundry, the works of which went through to the street beyond. One of the furnaces abutted almost directly on the path and we noticed that during certain days in the week this furnace was out of blast. It oc-

curred to some one that it would be possible for a man to tumble in from the pathway to the cavity of the furnace and, lying there until nightfall, to make his way in the dark across the turnpike bridge to North Carolina and possible safety. In the early part of the winter, the guards had been strict in their supervision of the parties, counting the group as we came out and as we returned, and keeping a close watch as we marched. Later, the supervision decreased; it was realised that the chances of escape were small and that apart from the difficulty of getting out of the town, the prospect of getting safely through the journey to our lines was very slim. The water parties were also made larger because we had insisted that no one man was strong enough to carry even a half-full bucket. The men whose shoes still possessed any possibility of service drew lots for the chance of tumbling into the furnace. The first trial came out happily. Under a prearranged plan, the last man of the water party, losing his shoe in the mud, stopped to regain it and the guard who brought up the end of the procession naturally had to stop with him. The man marching immediately in

front of that guard was the one who had drawn the lot and he tumbled over unobserved into the furnace hole on the right. A week later, another chap got off in the same way and in the course of four or five weeks, four men in all succeeded in getting away. Each chance had to wait for a convenient opportunity. The furnace fire must be out, the water party had to be fairly large, and the guards must not be too observant.

The question as to making good the count at the morning roll-call had of course been considered. The sergeant who had charge of the roll was a good-natured one-armed veteran from South Carolina. It was his habit, after seeing that the yard was clear, to count the men in the lower room and then, making his way up the straight steps and watching to see that no one passed him, to add to his count the men who were in the room above. If these two figures made up the number of prisoners who ought to be present, his responsibility was ended. We managed, before the first man got away, to cut a trap-door in the flooring between the two rooms in the corner diagonally farthest from the hatchway. We had still avail-

able the saw that had been utilised on the folding doors and I think that another saw was manufactured for the purpose. Over this trap-door was placed a chap who groaned with more or less real inflammatory rheumatism, and the scraps of blanket on which he lay covered the lines of the trap-door. A certain amount of groaning on the part of the rheumatic patient kept the good-natured sergeant from inspecting his corner too closely. On the morning after the first escape, the patient being for the moment removed from his corner, a prisoner from below was hustled upon the shoulders of a comrade so as to be counted over again in the room above. There was of course a little more difficulty after the second and after the third escape in getting two and then three men through the trap-door while the sergeant was passing up the stairway. The sergeant was, however, kept engaged in conversation on the causes of the war, on the history of South Carolina, or on some other engrossing subject, and as long as no one passed him on the stairs, he had no reason to feel suspicious at the delay. When the fourth prisoner got away, the problem of the

trap-door became, however, quite serious. It was finally arranged that there should be an accident on the stairway. A couple of chaps began scuffling, near the top step, as if in play, and at the critical moment when the sergeant was halfway up, the scufflers tumbled over, rolling down the stairs and carrying the sergeant with them. There was of course risk of broken arms or something worse, but they all got off with a few bruises and after earnest apologies, the sergeant was permitted to make his way upstairs and to complete his count. Two of the men who took the furnace road to freedom got across the river into North Carolina, and one of these, after a long and freezing sojourn in the mountains, actually turned up within our lines somewhere in Tennessee. The other was never heard from and doubtless perished in the wilderness.* The other two thought they would have a better chance in Virginia, but they were both captured before they had got very far

* After my paper was put into type, I learned that this statement was an error. I have received from the veteran referred to a letter denying, with some indignation, that he had ever "perished in the wilderness." He succeeded, with no little pluck and endurance, in making his way to our lines on the coast of North Carolina.

north and were taken to Richmond. The first man was identified as coming from Danville, and General Winder, the commissary of prisoners, sent word up to the commander of our prison, a word that must have been in the shape of a reprimand, to know why he had not reported the escape of his prisoner. Our commander, a one-legged Marylander, reported that there must be some error or that the Yankee was lying, as he had all his prisoners in hand. A week or two later, the second chap was captured and also taken to Richmond and a similar, and probably sharper, reproof came up to Danville. Then the commander said he would do the counting himself. He had us all put into the upper room and went over the ranks man by man. When he found that there were four Yankees short, he was a very excited lieutenant-colonel indeed. He made us an address, speaking with tears in his eyes, of the pains he had taken to make us comfortable. He was actually reproaching the 350 men who were left with the crime of the four who had gotten away. His indignation that there should be any dissatisfaction on our part reminded me of Mr. Bumble's

impressive words to Oliver Twist. As far as I know, the secret of the trap-door was not discovered, but the poor sergeant of South Carolina was deprived of his job and thereafter the roll was called in the upper room with all present. It happened further that after the escape of the four men, the work in the foundry became more active and there was practically no time when it could be utilised by us.

Our guards represented rather a curious mixture of good-natured indifference and a kind of half-witted cruelty. The officers were, as stated, disabled veterans and were on the whole not a bad lot. This was true also of certain of the sergeants. The rank and file, however, can best be described as scrapings from the mountains. They were mostly slight, overgrown youngsters with less than the proper proportion of wits. They seemed something like the beans that had been given to us in our soup at Libby, not fit for service in the Confederate ranks but good enough for the Yankee prisoners. I assume that if the disease had at that date been discovered, they would have been described as hook-worm patients. I remember

one incident which indicated the lack of proper soldierly control. A man standing near me was washing his tin plate out of the window and some drops of water fell on the head of the guard below. Without a word of caution, the guard turned, put up his piece, and fired. The ball, missing the man at whom it was directed, went through the floor a little farther along and shattered the arm of a fellow who was entirely innocent in the matter. A shattered arm in the low state of vitality, which was general in February, was a very serious thing, and it is my memory that this poor fellow lost his life. Some of us who had seen the whole matter made up a report for the officer of the guard and demanded that the guard should be punished. He disappeared for a few days and we assumed that he was somewhere under discipline. But when he returned he had on corporal's stripes and was more cocky than ever. He belonged to the half-witted lot, and I do not believe he had any full responsibility for his actions. He was in fact not fit to be trusted with a musket.

In December, 1864, when it seemed as if the resumption of general exchanges might still be

indefinitely delayed, an agreement was arrived at between the authorities on either side for the paroling of certain officers who could be used for the distribution among their fellow-prisoners of supplies delivered for the purpose under flag of truce. As the death-rate in the Southern prisons continued to increase, there was naturally an increasing pressure brought to bear on the part of the kinsfolk of the prisoners upon the authorities in Washington to do something either to bring about exchange or in some other way to save the lives of the men. The interest of the Confederacy in bringing about exchange has already been referred to, and the view of Commissioner Ould that it was desirable to secure the return of able-bodied veterans in exchange for used-up Yankees who could never fight again, finally prevailed, but not until February, 1865. In December, the authorities in Washington, carrying out promptly the agreement arrived at, paroled a Confederate general, Beale of Georgia, who was permitted to select as associates three or four other officers. A number of bales of cotton were sent up from Savannah, under flag of truce, only a week or two

before the capture of the city by Sherman had transferred to the United States the title to all the cotton remaining in the city. This cotton was sold on the cotton exchange in New York for the account of General Beale, and the price being in the neighbourhood of $1.50 a pound, he secured sufficient funds for his purposes. The authorities in charge of the Confederate prisons acted more slowly, and it was not until February that parole papers were given to General Joseph Hayes of Boston, and to three officers selected by him as his associates. The post of distributing officer on parole was naturally very much in demand. It meant direct communication with home, clean clothes, soap, and the possibility of something to eat; and Hayes must have had difficulty in making his selections. I was very fortunate, having but a slight personal acquaintance with the general, to be taken for his junior assistant in the work to be done in Richmond. The senior was Colonel Charles Hooper of Boston. I do not recall the names of the other two officers who were paroled. One was posted in Danville and the other was sent to Salisbury. It is my impression that no attempt

was made for the distribution of supplies for prisons south of Salisbury.

Hayes, Hooper, and myself were shipped back to Richmond on a train which seemed to be still slower than that by which we had three months back journeyed to Danville. At the close of February, 1865, the single track road from Richmond to Danville was in very bad condition, while the pressure upon the rails must have been very considerable. We were given quarters in Richmond in a tobacco factory, not very far from Libby Prison, and a coloured corporal from Weitzel's brigade was paroled to wait upon us. It was my duty as the youngest to report two or three times a week to the pier on the James where I met the officer in charge of our flag of truce boat, and to give a receipt to him for the supplies brought up. We had during the winter been permitted to write letters to be forwarded across the lines to friends at home. The restriction was that the letter should be on a half sheet and that it should be handed open to the adjutant of the prison. If the contents of the letter did not meet the approval of the adjutant, it was not to be forwarded. It

was only occasionally that we could secure scraps of paper on which to write, but I managed to place in the hands of the prison adjutant a letter to the home folks about once a week. It was only on my return home in March that I learned that but five of my letters had gotten through. I do not know whether the result with my letters could be taken as a fair example of what happened to the letters of the others. Two or three men with whom I had the opportunity later of comparing experiences, however, reported that their friends had received but three or four out of a long series of letters handed over to the prison adjutant. The letters sent home after the announcement of our parole were, however, safely delivered and as a result, we three officers who were fortunate enough to have been assigned in Richmond secured, by an early flag of truce boat, greetings from home, clean clothes, and soap. We hardly recognised ourselves after our first cleaning up and the replacing of the rags with blue cloth that held together.

The supplies delivered to me from the flag of truce boat comprised blankets, blouses, shirts,

trousers and shoes. I do not recall the receipt of any food. It would, in fact, have been pretty difficult to get food safely across hungry Richmond into the prisons even though the need of starving prisoners might be greater than that of the citizens. I had some difficulty in the outset in arranging to get my supplies "toted" across the town. There were hardly any vehicles within reach and those that came in sight were busy enough with the needs of the Confederate quartermaster and commissaries. Such waggons as I saw were drawn by mules, and in the lack of forage the mules were thin and were evidently getting pretty weary of their task. I finally got hold of a couple of darkies who were too old to be of any particular service for the Confederate officials. Coloured men were, of course, utilised very largely for service in the quartermaster's department and also for work in the trenches. These darkies got an old hand-cart, which, while too small to make the transport expeditious, answered the purpose fairly well. It was necessary for me to accompany each trip of the hand-cart, as otherwise the coloured men would have been promptly arrested as thieves and

the goods would have been lost. My parole papers had to be shown to every legitimate enquirer and as a matter of fact were shown also to a number of unofficial enquirers who were puzzled that a fellow in clean Federal uniform should be walking through Richmond without guard. It is fair to say that I met with hardly any instances of discourtesy. It is probable that if I had been carrying on this work a year or two earlier, I should have had more difficulty in getting through the streets of Richmond without abuse of some kind or other. By February, 1865, however, the residents of Richmond, and particularly those who had done service in the ranks, evidently understood that the war was coming to a close. They had in fact information which was not yet available for a prisoner like myself. The certainty that Richmond must before many weeks be in the hands of our troops might very easily have influenced the manners of the street crowd.

I had promised, under the conditions of my parole, to go nowhere about the city excepting between the three prisons, Libby, Castle Thunder, and one other building, the name of which I have

forgotten. It is my belief that about this date the miserable encampment on Belle Isle which had served earlier as a prison and where so many of our good men had frozen to death, had been abandoned. General Hayes learned that in a building, not far from our quarters had been stored a number of packages sent through the lines for our prisoners, and he directed me to visit the building and to give him a report. I found some thousands of packages which had accumulated for years and many of which had crumbled almost to dust. The sight was really pathetic when one bore in mind the loving thought with which the little parcels had been prepared in Northern homes and had been sent forth as a greeting to the soldier member of the family. It is difficult to understand just what the idea of the prison authorities had been in regard to these packages. They had received them by flag of truce with the understanding, if not with the promise, that they would be delivered as far as the men to whom they were addressed were within reach. No trouble, however, appears to have been taken to look up the owners. The fragments of many opened packages indicated

that things which gave any appearance of value had been appropriated by the guards, while the thousands of packages that remained had simply been thrown into a corner of the tobacco warehouse to rot. The contents of such of the parcels as were still intact were naturally varied. I remember, among the things that remained, testaments, locks of hair, packs of cards, and reading matter of one kind or another, from hymns to melodramatic romances. With these articles were in most cases loving short signatures which gave no clue to the full name of the writer. Not a few of the packages had contained food and these had naturally decayed with the damp or had been eaten up by rats and by insects. The traces of the food could, however, still be noted on the wrappers.

I made out lists of the names and addresses that could still be deciphered on the wrappers of the parcels which were not too much decayed and the contents of which could still be of value for the prisoners. These lists I compared with the rosters of the prisons and in the chance that some of the roster names might not have been correctly

entered, I took pains more than once to call out the names at the roll-call of the prisoners. I recall but one or two instances in which I was able to connect the men with the parcels. The accumulation had been going on for such a period of months and of years that the men had very largely disappeared, either by exchange or by death. The general finally told me to give up the task as not worth further labour.

I may recall in this connection a remark of the prison adjutant, in regard to my roll-call. As I came into the prison, the men would at once fall into line, knowing that if I had any package or message or any material to distribute it would be necessary for me to call the roll. "I don't understand, Adjutant," said my guide, "how you secure such prompt attention for your roll-call. When I come in in the morning for my count, it takes any number of minutes to get the fellows into line and they all insist that on the ground of rheumatism or other invalidism, it is impossible for them to move any more quickly."

I have no very clear memory of the appearance of the Richmond streets, but one impression remains

vividly in my mind. My walk to Castle Thunder took me across Main Street where, in the morning hours, I met the women going to market, and sad-looking women they were. They were for the most part dressed in black and in the cases in which, doubtless for the sake of economy, they wore butternut brown, the faces were none the less in mourning. They looked as if they were all widows or orphans. The figures were wan as well they might be, for at this time the whole town was restricted to the shortest of short rations. In their market baskets, they carried great wads of Confederate currency, but I knew well how little purchasing power those blue-back dollars possessed, and I knew also from our corporal who did our little marketing, that with the best money, or with the largest amount of the worst money, there was hardly anything in the market to buy. Some considerate authority in Washington, bearing in mind that the paroled officers would have expenses to meet, had had the thought of sending down with our other goods a chest of Confederate money taken from the supplies that had as a result of captures accumulated in Washington

during the four years. My receipt was given at the boat for "one chest of money, precise contents unknown." There were in that chest millions upon millions of dollars, more, in volume at least, than I had ever dreamed of possessing. In sending our man to market, I used to take from the chest armfuls of money, jamming it into the market basket until the basket would hold no more. In exchange for this mass of "legal tender," we would receive a dozen or two ears of corn or a little ground meal, and now and then as a special luxury a piece of mule steak. I remember one morning our man, with no little air of triumph, brought in an egg. I was afraid to ask how many thousand dollars had been paid for that egg. Said the general, "Gentlemen, I do not usually claim the privileges of rank, but it is my impression that that egg properly belongs to the officer in command." We naturally raised no objection, and when the egg, having been boiled, was placed upon the table and the top was taken off, it was the unanimous decision that as far as *rank* was concerned, it could be appropriated by anybody who wanted it.

That egg must have been laid between the lines during several campaigns.

We had expected to make a long sojourn in Richmond, but within a fortnight of our arrival, we got news that the long-delayed exchange had been finally declared. I think my work on parole lasted in all about three weeks. When we heard that a date had been fixed for our departure, I reminded the general that we had still to receive from the adjutant of Libby Prison a report concerning the moneys that had been taken from us. I recalled the memorandum book in which the amounts had been entered and the promise that these should be returned to us at the close of our imprisonment. The general was himself interested to the extent of some hundreds of dollars and he promptly instructed me to present his compliments at the office of Commissioner Ould and to ask for an accounting. At this late period in the campaign, the commissioner was a difficult man to find, but after various calls I finally succeeded in securing an interview and in giving him the message. I took the liberty of adding a statement of my own personal interest in the matter. One hundred

and fifty dollars loomed very large in my memory and it certainly represented hard earnings. The commissioner seemed embarrassed. "Adjutant," he said, "the officer who had charge of that part of the prison business in October last is now dead, and I am sorry to say that there was some confusion in his accounts. Of course, however, you gentlemen ought to have your money. I will look into the matter and see what can now be done." I reminded the commissioner that we were to leave for the North at an early date and asked if I could call the next day. I got an appointment but I did not find my commissioner. And it was only after delivering through his secretary a rather peremptory note from the general, that I did succeed in securing a further word with him. "The general directs me to say, Commissioner, that he will take to Washington such report in regard to these moneys as you see fit to send. If the Confederate authorities instruct us to say that they are unable to trace the record of these deposits and to make good the promise given by the prison officials, the general will carry such statement to Washington." "No, no, Adjutant,"

said the commissioner with some annoyed hesitation. "Of course, we do not wish any such report to go out. It is a mere matter of detail and bookkeeping. The money will of course be forthcoming." "I am instructed, sir," I replied, "to call again to-morrow in case I can not secure your report to-day." I did call on the morrow, but to no purpose. I called for the last time the day following and waited until within fifteen minutes of the departure of the boat; but finally decided that home and freedom were of more value than a claim against the Confederate government for $150, and leaving my name, I made a quick run for the wharf.

I learned later from the reports of my prison comrades some of the incidents of their journey from Danville to Richmond. As soon as the announcement was made that the exchange had been effected and that our men were to leave immediately for the North, traders from the town made their way into the prison with offers of money to such of the prisoners as were able to give an impression of financial responsibility, and of having at home fathers or other correspondents who

would be likely to honour their drafts. If these Danville traders could have been induced earlier in the winter to hand over Confederate money in exchange for drafts on the North, much suffering would have been avoided and undoubtedly some lives would have been saved. I imagine that the certainty that the Confederacy was approaching its downfall constituted an important influence in bringing these traders to the conclusion that with the prospect of very satisfactory profit on the drafts that were honoured, they could afford to take the risk on some of the more doubtful clients. The offers were, if I recollect rightly, at the rate of exchange of one hundred blue-back dollars for one greenback. The actual "value," if the blue-back could have been said at that time to have any real value, would have been more nearly at the rate of one thousand to one. Of course, in accordance with the usual army practice, if one man secured funds, money was available for every one who was in need. The train was made up but slowly and the guards had no reason to be particularly watchful of their prisoners, none of whom had any desire to remain in Danville. There

was, therefore, plenty of time with the aid of this newly acquired wealth to make purchases in the town before starting for Richmond. Shoes were secured and something in the form of jackets and trousers. I imagine that our men preferred to wear butternut garments that were complete rather than to remain in blue cloth rags.

It was only when our men came to visit the Danville shops that they realised how trifling was the value of the blue-back currency in exchange for which they had just given good money in drafts on their fathers in the North. Dealers are usually glad to make sales, but in March, 1865, the wise shop-keeper preferred to hold on to his shoes and blouses rather than to exchange them for pieces of paper which in the course of a few days would have no market value whatsoever. Shoes were quoted at two thousand dollars; and blouses and rough shirts were held at corresponding prices. The boys were disappointed to find that they had not secured through their drafts enough money to obtain any satisfactory outfits, and they were not allowed the time for further financial operations or for another shopping expedition. Some

supplies of food were also bought which proved useful enough for the journey to Richmond, a trip the length of which was seriously increased by the frequent siding of the train. Certain of the officers were injudicious enough to include with their purchases some apple-jack rum, but I was told that, realising the certainty of disaster if, after so long a period of starvation any drinking was indulged in, they did not use the rum or any serious quantity of it for themselves, but partly as a matter of policy and partly as a joke, gave it to the guards.

According to the story as it came to me, by the time they reached Richmond late in the evening of the second day, these guards, with the exception of the officer in command and his orderly sergeant, were so drunk that there was no possibility of steering them with any kind of decent discipline across Richmond with the prisoners. In fact, many of them, lying down on the platform of the station, refused to move at all. The lieutenant in command, a one-armed veteran of not a bad sort, was in a state of perplexity and mortification. Our officers were ready,

however, to cheer him up. "Don't be troubled, Lieutenant. We 'll find our way across to Libby Prison without a guard. You can come over in the morning with your guard and you will find us all ready to answer roll-call. Of course," they added, "we are not going to be out of the way to-morrow morning. We 've got to get to Libby. We have business in the North." There was nothing else for the lieutenant to do, and he let the Yankees leave the station in their own way. Our boys tramped across the town very much as they chose. Not all of them knew the way and those who did were not interested in going straight. When they encountered any of the town guards, their word was very simple. They were poor Yankee prisoners who, wanting to go to Libby Prison, had lost their way. They managed, according to the story, to have a good deal of fun that night. They straggled over the town, seeing the sights, being arrested from time to time and "honourably discharged," but in the end, as promised, all making their way to the entrance of Mr. Libby's ship-chandlery warehouse. The prison sergeant must have had a wearisome night. He

was called up from hour to hour to let in the straggling Yankees. "You *must* let us in," was the demand. "We are poor stray Yankees with no other place to go to. We must get into Libby." At no other time during the war was that old building, so full of sad memories, a place into which entrance was desired. The next morning, the one-armed lieutenant came over with his sergeant and with a fair quorum of his resuscitated guard. The roll was called, the Yankees were found to be all on hand, and the lieutenant got his receipt and freed himself from further responsibility. It was with the fresh memory of this last practical joke in their minds that I found my comrades on reaching the flag of truce boat at the wharf behind Libby. Worn and weak as they were, many of them, in fact, seriously invalided and not a few never to recover any measure of health or strength, they were all cheered up with the realisation that they were again beneath the Stars and Stripes and with the certainty that home and loved ones were within reach.

The trip down the James River was interesting on more grounds than one. We had a glimpse of

the camps of the Army of the James and a full view of the great depots which the commissaries and quartermasters had established along the river. We passed in the upper region of the stream, the one or two vessels remaining of the Confederate James River Fleet, while near Bermuda Hundred (if I recall the locality correctly) we ran over the wrecks of certain Confederate gunboats which had been smashed by our own vessels or batteries. A little below Bermuda Hundred we passed another flag of truce boat bringing up-stream the Confederate prisoners who had been exchanged for us. The boats passed near enough for a fairly trustworthy inspection of the passengers, and we could not but feel that, as far as military effectiveness was concerned, our government was making a bad bargain. The Southern troops had had clothing issued to them by our own prison quartermasters, and some of them, who had passed through Baltimore, had also been fitted out with additional equipment by sympathising friends. They looked sturdy and fit for service. I admit that such hasty views as it was possible to secure while the boats were passing could hardly be

accepted as historic evidence, but our impressions were confirmed by the later history.

The long delay in arriving at the exchange had, as I understand, been due to two causes. The Southerners had from an early period in the war taken the stand that negro troops who had been, or who might have been, slaves should not be exchanged, and the same prohibition was to hold against the white officers of the negro regiments. Lincoln took the ground (very properly) that all the United States soldiers must be protected alike, and that until the negro troops and their white officers could be assured of receiving as prisoners the same treatment that was accorded to the other prisoners and could be placed upon the same basis for exchange lists, the exchange should be stopped. The block of the exchange on this ground continued for a series of months, and then, under the pressure of requirement from the generals demanding to have their ranks filled up, Davis conceded the point and consented to the re-establishment of exchange arrangements. He agreed also, at least in form, to give to the negro prisoners and to the officers of their regiments the same treatment that

was accorded to the others. As a fact, however, as far as we had the opportunity of hearing the prison gossip, both the privates and the officers of the coloured regiments had a specially hard time.

The exchange was later blocked under a policy for which, I believe, Secretary Stanton must take the responsibility. In one of his letters of 1864, he pointed out that it would not be good policy to send back to be placed again on the fighting line, 70,000 able-bodied Confederates, and to receive in exchange men who, with but few exceptions, were not strong enough to hold their muskets. Stanton, while arbitrary, was not a cruel man. I doubt whether his judgment in this matter was sound, because it was not fair to our own prisoners or to the army as a whole. The conclusions that he reached, after having in his hands reports from the Northern prisons and reports of the examination of the men who were being returned from the Southern prisons, were undoubtedly however based upon a pretty clear understanding of the actual conditions. The exchange finally brought about on the first of March, 1865, was probably the result in the main

of pressure brought to bear upon Stanton, through President Lincoln, on the part of the relatives of the prisoners and of the leaders in the field who took the ground that our soldiers were entitled to protection and to a fair chance for life, whether they were prisoners or not.

Our particular group of "exchanged rubbish" was taken to Annapolis, and we were kept there for a week or more before being allowed to be distributed to our homes. I believe the purpose was to get us cleaned up, as it was not considered good form to send to decent Northern homes men who were still infected with vermin. The three or four of us who, having been on parole, had already done our cleaning up, naturally protested, and I think we were finally permitted to get away a day or two before the others.

It was true also that a considerable proportion of the men were actually not strong enough to travel, and had to be toned up with care and with a gradual increase of nourishment. There were in fact quite a number of deaths in Annapolis of men who, having waited patiently for months, were not to be permitted after all again to see

their homes. As far as I was able to judge from the reports given by the surgeons in charge of the depot in Annapolis, and by the information secured later, but very few of the prisoners who were returned under the exchange of March, 1865, were fitted for further service, or ever did get back to the front. I must myself have belonged to the tougher lot for I was, after a fortnight's rest, adjudged fit for service, but after reporting to my regiment, I did not again meet in the field a single one of my old-time prison associates.

I learned when reporting for duty (by letter to the Adjutant-General in Washington) that my regiment which still belonged to Grover's division of the 19th Army Corps, was stationed at Newbern, North Carolina. The transportation given to me from the Quartermaster's Department, fixed a route from Norfolk through the Great Dismal Swamp Canal, and then by way of Albemarle and Pamlico Sounds to Morehead City. This was a part of the South that I had never visited, and I found the journey novel and interesting. The little boat used for the canal was modest in dimensions, and its engine gave it a

speed of about six miles an hour. We were told that there were in the swamp hundreds, or perhaps thousands of refugees and deserters, coloured and white, and that boats on the canal were subject to attack. I judge that the attacks were made not so much for the service of the Confederacy as for the purpose of plunder. Our boat was armed with a little Gatling gun, or possibly a gun of some patent preceding the Gatling. According to my memory, the gun was a very crude affair, and certainly needed development to become an efficient instrument. Its range was short, as it had been planned for the purpose of throwing grape-shot or musket-balls as a volley for a few hundred feet only. It was, therefore, not ill-fitted for the particular work now required to keep the banks of the river clear from skirmishers. The cartridges were, as I remember, thrown into a hopper and the gun, having been sighted, was worked with a kind of crank. This sent out the balls in a more or less continuous volley until the supply in the hopper was exhausted. One of the defects of the armament was that there was no protection for the man working the hopper. We came under

fire several times during our trip, and one hopper-gunner was wounded. On the whole, however, our volleys proved effective in clearing the bushes along the canal; but it was, nevertheless, satisfactory to emerge from the dark and dubious recesses of the swamp into the open waters of Albemarle Sound, and to be transferred to the larger boat which took charge of the United States mails and supplies. Our trip from the mouth of the canal to Morehead City was uneventful, being varied only with an occasional running aground. The sound had many shallows and the old-time beacons had disappeared, and I judge that navigation must have been difficult. From Morehead City, we made our way by rail, a very uneven and jolting rail, to Newbern. There, I had the satisfaction of reporting to my regiment and of securing the kind of greeting that comes to a comrade whom they had not expected to see again. The Department of North Carolina was at that time under the command of General Terry. The General enjoyed the distinction of being possibly the only civilian General officer, that is to say General officer who had had no previous military training, who had dur-

ing an active service of four years "made good" with every responsibility that was placed upon him, and who retained at the close of the war, with credit to himself and with full advantage to the service, an independent command.

While at Newbern, I had knowledge of an example of heroism that deserved a larger measure of appreciation and of honour than was ever given to it. Several representatives of the Sanitary and Christian Commissions were working in the department giving service to the soldiers, not only to the invalids, but to those who while well enough for duty were glad to receive reading matter and to secure help in the writing of their letters; but probably the larger portion of their labour was devoted to the contrabands. A contraband camp had, under the orders of the commander, been established at a distance of a mile or two from the town into which had been corralled the darkies, young and old, who were continually making their way into the lines and calling for protection and for food. The able-bodied fellows were utilised, as far as requirement came, for manual labour about the Post and for personal service to the

officers. The quartermaster issued the most needful articles of clothing and the commissary gave a half ration, which was so much in advance of what the people had been accustomed to receive that it had for them the effect of the highest luxury. During the weeks of my sojourn in Newbern, smallpox broke out in this contraband camp, and it became necessary for the protection of the town and of the soldiers, to shut off at once and absolutely communication between the contrabands and the Post and settlements. A cordon of sentries was drawn around the camp, and no one was allowed to pass one way or the other. Food was placed by the sentries at points at which it could be secured and taken into camp by the negroes, but there was at the time at least no medical aid and, according to the gossip that leaked out through the sentry lines, the stronger men and women were taking possession of the food, and those who were sick were dying from starvation as well as from the pest. Impressed with the accounts of the conditions and of the misery under which the coloured community was suffering, two representatives of the Christian Mission, Vincent

Colyer, an artist of New York, with an associate whose name I have forgotten, had an interview with General Terry and the post surgeon and offered to take charge of the contraband camp. The surgeon emphasised, naturally, that if these men once crossed the picket line they could not come back to civilisation until the pest had been stamped out, but that condition Colyer, of course, already understood. The authorities were well pleased to accept the service and sacrifice offered, because, under the existing conditions, the risk of infection for the town and for the troops was very serious. Colyer and his friend made their way across the lines, taking with them medicines and supplies. They arranged for a trustworthy system for the sending out of reports of conditions and for the receipt from day to day of the further supplies that would be required. I learned afterwards that they had found in the camp a kind of pandemonium. The sick were dying without attendance, and the old people, the women and children, and the feeble folk generally, overawed by those who were stronger, were not getting any adequate share of the provisions that had been placed within

reach. Colyer organised, under threat of severe punishment for any disobedience, the men who were strong enough into gangs for burying the dead, for caring for the sick, and for doing the cleaning up that was urgently required. The women, encouraged by the presence of trustworthy authority, took charge again of the cooking and washing. Whatever treatment was necessary had to be carried out, and was carried out, without direct medical aid. In the course of a few weeks' time, smallpox was stamped out and Colyer and his associate, who had fortunately escaped the contagion, were free to return to civilisation. It was the kind of service that deserved the American equivalent of the Victoria Cross or of the Cross of the Legion of Honour; but as far as I know, no official recognition other than the thanks of General Terry and of the post surgeon, were ever given to these two devoted patriots.

I did not find myself attracted with the region of Eastern North Carolina. The land is low and in no way picturesque. The fighting portion of the inhabitants had for years been busied elsewhere. It is, I believe, on record that North

Carolina contributed to the army, a larger portion of troops (not only in proportion to its population but in the absolute aggregate) than any other State in the Confederacy. The men of the North had reason to know from experience on many a hardly contested battle-field that the "tar-heels" could fight. What we saw of the homes of these North Carolina citizens on the eastern coast did not give us a favourable impression of their standard of comfort. Not a few of the women of the poorer class had impaired their complexions and any beauty that their mouths might once have had, by the practice of clay-eating or snuff-dipping. In looking over the dreary little cottages on the coast, I recalled the description given in Olmsted's *Seaboard Slave States*. This book, published in 1858, gave an account of a trip taken on horseback by an intelligent Yankee farmer from Virginia along the coast to Jacksonville. Olmsted's descriptions of the condition of the South just before the war have often been compared to those given by Arthur Young in his *Travels in France* written a year or two before the outbreak of the Revolution of 1783. Olmsted writes with reserve,

but he makes clear that the commercial foundations of the Southern planters were unsound, and it was evident to him that trouble of some kind was near at hand. It has in fact been made clear by the later history, that the impending bankruptcy of thousands of the great planters, leaders in society and in politics, while, of course, not one of the larger causes of the war, was a not unimportant influence in hastening events. Olmsted's book has been kept in print, and half a century later it is still the acknowledged authority on its subject.

Another volume which brought out much more excitement at the time was likewise connected with North Carolina. In 1859 was published by an active-minded North Carolina citizen named Hinton Rowan Helper, a volume called *The Impending Crisis*. In this book, Helper, who was evidently a keen observer, describes the resources of the South and the conditions of its prosperity. He points out that these conditions rested on an insecure foundation. He is confident that commercial trouble is near at hand, and he sees that this expectation must, of necessity, ac-

centuate the political unrest. He points out further that the belief in the wealth of the South was largely exaggerated. I remember among other details he mentions that the value of the hay crop in the North was greater than that of the entire cotton crop. Helper's keen analysis and unsatisfactory conclusions proved very distasteful to his neigbours in North Carolina, as to the South generally. The book became the text for bitter controversies in Washington, and its author was for years banished from Southern soil. The historians of to-day understand the value and the importance of the descriptions given by these two authors and the substantial trustworthiness of their descriptions and predictions.

Early in April, Terry received orders to abandon the posts and garrisons on the coast, and to collect every fighting musket that he had available to make a line between the Goldsboro region and the Virginia border. Sherman was coming North from Columbia, and was anxious that Johnston, who was, with his old-time skill and persistency, making the best possible defensive fight with his retreating army, should be prevented

from joining forces with Lee. Sherman had had news of the breaking of the lines in front of Richmond, and he realised that the purpose of Lee and Johnston would be to get together for a final struggle somewhere in the neighbourhood of Danville. The battalions available were gathered in from the coast and marched through the State towards Goldsboro and my command was finally placed at Durham Station.

The Commissary-General, in ransacking the country for supplies, reported that he found substantial stores of corn-meal and of corn on the cob in various warehouses in Goldsboro and in other stations in the region. These had, of course, been collected for the needs of the army in Virginia. Those of us who had recently been prisoners in Danville, close to the North Carolina line, and who knew about the conditions obtaining in the infamous prison of Salisbury, a few miles to the west, realised that, with these stores of corn available, there had been no excuse for the starvation rations upon which the prisoners had tried to live, and as a result of which so many of our prisoners had failed to live, both in Danville and in Salisbury.

The knowledge that food had been within easy reach of prisons in which the lives of our comrades had been sacrificed on starvation rations, gave us a renewed feeling of indignation against those who were chiefly responsible for the management of the prisons of the South,—Jefferson Davis, General Winder, and Commissioner Ould.

Terry was able to make some show of troops between Goldsboro and the roads to Virginia; but the line was very thin and could not have withstood any well-directed attack from an army like Johnston's. Sherman kept himself, however, so close on the heels of the retreating Confederates that General Johnston, plucky and persistent as he was, had found it impracticable to break away northward and our thin line was never attacked.

The events that followed are matters of well-known history. I had the satisfaction of standing in line with my regiment when General Johnston surrendered at Durham Station the last effective army of the Confederacy. The war was at an end, and the Republic had been maintained.

A fortnight before the dramatic event at Durham Station, there came to our troops the

overpowering sorrow of the news of the death of Lincoln. The work to which the Great Captain had devoted his best years and had now sacrificed his life, was in a sense completed. He had carried out his pledge of maintaining the life of the Nation. I have described elsewhere the manner in which the news of the death of the great Leader came to the soldiers and the way in which they received it. I found myself a unit in the crowd of ten thousand men all overpowered by the same emotion. Never before had I seen thousands of grown men sobbing together. It is impossible now, fifty years after the event, to recall the feeling of that day without being again touched with the wave of emotion.

The sorrow came not only to the Army and to the North; the South came later to realise how great had been the loss, for its own pressing needs, in the death of the shrewd, kindly, sympathetic, far-seeing President. Lincoln, with his old-time knowledge of and sympathy with the problems of the South, would have given in full measure his thought and vitality to the service of the great communities that were now desolate and that were in urgent need of the guidance of the National

Government and of help and resources from their late opponents. We may feel confident that Lincoln's influence would have prevailed with the leaders of Northern opinion, that wiser policies would have directed reconstruction and that the South would have accepted cordially the hand of fellowship extended for its recuperation and reorganisation.

The discouraging and mortifying experiences of the reconstruction years would have been avoided or would at least have been very much minimised. There was no other man in the country who could have taken hold of the complex problems with any similar prospect of success. The death of Lincoln was a most serious misfortune in the way of reconstitution of the Republic, and it took years of sad experience to bring back to the policies that Lincoln would assuredly have advocated and have directed, the men who became responsible for the conduct of the National Government.

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